

# ***2005-2006 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program***

## ***U.S. Department of Education***

**Cover Sheet** Type of School: (Check all that apply) ☒ Elementary ☐ Middle ☐ High ☐ K-12 ☐ Charter

Name of Principal Mrs. Cathy Engler  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Riverside Elementary School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 220 NW 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address)

Brainerd MN 56401-3225  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Crow Wing State School Code Number\* 012

Telephone ( 218 ) 829-3631 Fax ( 218 ) 829-9685

Website/URL www.riverside.brainerd.k12.mn.us E-mail Cathy.Engler@isd181.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Superintendent\* Mr. Gerald Walseth  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Independent School District #181 Tel. ( 218 ) 822-6900

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this package, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## **PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

**[Include this page in the school's application as page 2.]**

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has not been in school improvement status or been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2005-2006 school years.
3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, it has foreign language as a part of its core curriculum.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2000 and has not received the 2003, 2004, or 2005 *No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Award*.
5. The nominated school or district is not refusing the OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
6. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if the OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
7. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school, or the school district as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
8. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

**DISTRICT** (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district:        8   Elementary schools  
      1   Middle schools  
      -   Junior high schools  
      1   High schools  
      3   Other  
     13  TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure:      \$8,473.00  
     Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \$8,379.00

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

- ☐ Urban or large central city  
☐ Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area  
☐ Suburban  
☒ Small city or town in a rural area  
☐ Rural

4.   18   Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.  
     \_\_\_\_\_ If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only. At the end of the 2004 – 2005 school year 5<sup>th</sup> grade was removed from all elementary buildings in the Brainerd School District:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	14	7	21	7			
K	52	48	100	8			
1	42	62	104	9			
2	54	51	105	10			
3	44	58	102	11			
4	48	56	104	12			
5				Other			
6							
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →							536

*[Throughout the document, round numbers to avoid decimals.]*

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:
- |                   |                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>97.0</u>       | % White                          |
| <u>1.0</u>        | % Black or African American      |
| <u>1.0</u>        | % Hispanic or Latino             |
| <u>1.0</u>        | % Asian/Pacific Islander         |
| <u>--</u>         | % American Indian/Alaskan Native |
| <b>100% Total</b> |                                  |

Use only the five standard categories in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of the school.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 6.0 %

[This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.]

<b>(1)</b>	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	25
<b>(2)</b>	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	9
<b>(3)</b>	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	34
<b>(4)</b>	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	611
<b>(5)</b>	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	.0556
<b>(6)</b>	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	5.56

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 0 %  
0 Total Number Limited English Proficient

Number of languages represented: 0

Specify languages:

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 34 %

Total number students who qualify: 179

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families or the school does not participate in the federally-supported lunch program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services: 18 %  
116 Total Number of Students Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>1</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>3</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>45</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>56</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>7</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities	

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

**Number of Staff**

	<u><b>Full-time</b></u>	<u><b>Part-Time</b></u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>--</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>18</u>	<u>4</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>2</u>	<u>42</u>
Support staff	<u>8</u>	<u>5</u>
Total number	<u>36</u>	<u>52</u>

12. Average school student-“classroom teacher” ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers: 29:1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. The student dropout rate is defined by the state. The student drop-off rate is the difference between the number of entering students and the number of exiting students from the same cohort. (From the same cohort, subtract the number of exiting students from the number of entering students; divide that number by the number of entering students; multiply by 100 to get the percentage drop-off rate.) Briefly explain in 100 words or fewer any major discrepancy between the dropout rate and the drop-off rate. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates and only high schools need to supply drop-off rates.

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Daily student attendance	97%	97 %	96 %	96 %	96 %
Daily teacher attendance	95%	95 %	95 %	95 %	95 %
Teacher turnover rate	1%	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
Student dropout rate (middle/high)	%	%	%	%	%
Student drop-off rate (high school)	%	%	%	%	%

## PART III - SUMMARY

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Riverside Elementary School is located on the banks of the Mississippi River on the outskirts of Brainerd, Minnesota. Brainerd is a town of 13,000 located near the geographic center of the state, with abundant forests and hundreds of lakes that make the area a major Midwestern summer tourism destination. Founded in the 1800's under the original name, Old Crossing, Brainerd grew into an important railroad, lumber and fur trading center because of its proximity to the Mississippi River. Today, the major employers are resorts, regional medical center, the school district, and a paper mill.

Riverside is the largest elementary school in a district that includes eight elementary schools. The District includes the cities of Brainerd, Baxter, Nisswa, Garrison and Fort Ripley. Riverside Elementary is the only school in the District that does not have any students who walk to school. We are a school that draws students from every community in the county.

Riverside Elementary was originally built as a one-section school in 1956. Riverside has undergone several major additions since 1971, 1985, and 1995. In sixteen years, Riverside Elementary School has grown from approximately 120 students and a staff of 11, to a student enrollment of 614 and a staff of 80. Riverside's students come from a variety of diverse backgrounds and socioeconomic levels. The kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup> grade population include students that are moderately to severely mentally and/or physically impaired, emotionally-behaviorally disturbed and/or learning disabled, Title One and at-risk, gifted and talented as well. Riverside is also designated as the District's high risk health facility because of its ability to handle children with special medical needs or conditions including severe diabetes, seizures and/or physical challenges. In 2005, 17% of Riverside's students participated in special education classes.

Children are the number one priority at Riverside School. The staff is constantly searching for effective and meaningful ways to meet the needs of all students. Deeply committed to Minnesota's State Standards, a number of important programs are now in place at Riverside School that offers positive outcome for our students:

- Love and Logic Training for staff and parents
- Everyday Mathematics
- Reading Recovery' Music and theatrical programs
- Conflict Resolution Training
- Brain Based Learning Training for all staff

Many students also participate in an after CARE Program (Commitment to Academics, Relationships, and Excellence). This program is a free tutorial program for students who may need additional assistance in the areas of reading and math. Staff provides this academic assistance for any student in grades 1-4.

The Family Collaborative program was created in 1999. This program was developed to help parents, children and schools work effectively together. Through the Family Collaborative program, we have a Community/Counselor/Social worker in our school to address truancy, chronic health issues, and issues within the homes i.e. divorce, death of a family member, and leaving to serve in the military.

Title I also provides our students who qualify in the areas of math and reading with supportive instruction. This valuable program allows staff to work together to meet the individual needs of each child. This educational component may be provided within the classroom or as a pull out program.

## PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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1. **Assessment Results:** The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA's) are criterion referenced tests that provide information on individual students and the school's progress in the areas of reading, mathematics, and writing. These assessments allow schools and districts to measure student progress toward the state's academic standards. Every spring, all third and fifth grade students at Riverside School are administered these tests. In the spring of 2006, all fourth grade students will be included in the MCA process. Student test results are reported as levels. Students scoring at Level I are children who are performing below grade level and are in need of supplementary instruction. Level II are the students scoring slightly below grade level. Level III is those students who are typically working at or above grade level and are considered proficient. Our goal is for every student to be at Level III or higher. Level IV students are working above grade level. Level V students are those students who are clearly demonstrating evidence of advanced academic performance.

### Grade 3 Reading Highlights:

- In 2005, 61% of our third grade students received a Level V in reading as compared to 24% of all third grade students in the State of Minnesota.
- In 2005, 96% of our third grade students were at a Level III or above.
- In 2005, our third grade students Reading Performance Average Scale Score was 1734.3.
- In 2005, Brainerd School District's third grade student's Reading Performance Average Scale Score was 1618.4.
- In 2005, the State of Minnesota's third grade student's Reading Performance Average Scale Score was 1542.2.
- Over the last five years, our third grade students reading performance increased from 26% of our students receiving a Level 5 to 61% of our students receiving a Level 5. This is a 35% increase for students who are performing at and advanced academic level.

### Grade 3 Mathematics Highlights:

- In 2005, 63.3% of our third grade students received a Level V in mathematics as compared to 24.4% of third grade students in the State of Minnesota.
- In 2005, 96% of our third grade students received a Level III or above in mathematics as compared to 77% of all third grade student's in the State of Minnesota.
- In 2005, our third grade student's mathematics average scale score was 1819.2.
- In 2005, Brainerd School District's third grade student's mathematics average scale score was 1691.5.
- In 2005, the State of Minnesota's third grade student's mathematics performance average scale score was 1568.1.
- In 2005, our third grade student's mathematics performance at Level V was 63.27%
- Over the past five years, our third grade student's mathematics performance increase from 37% of our students receiving a Level V to 63% of our students receiving a Level V. This is a 28% increase for students who are performing at an advanced academic level.

### Grade 5 Reading Highlights:

- In 2005, 61% of our fifth grade students received a Level V in reading as compared to 36% of the fifth grade students in the State of Minnesota.
- In 2005, 99% of our fifth grade student were at a Level III or above.
- In 2005, our reading performance for all of our 5<sup>th</sup> grade students' average scale score was 1741.3.
- In 2005, Brainerd School District's fifth grade students reading performance average scale

score was 1680.0.

- In 2005, the State of Minnesota's fifth grade student's reading performance average scale score was 1608.8.
- Over the last five years, our fifth grade students reading performance increased from 38% of our student's receiving a Level V to 61% of our students receiving a Level V. This is an increase of 23% of our students who are performing at an advanced academic level.

#### Grade 5 Mathematics Highlights:

- In 2005, 60% of our fifth grade student's performed at a Level V in math as compared to 22% of fifth grade students in the State of Minnesota.
- In 2005, 99% of our fifth grade students were at a Level III or above.
- In 2005, 66% of all fifth grade students were at a Level III or above in the State of Minnesota.
- In 2005, the mathematic performance average scale score was 1765.7 for all of our fifth grade students.
- In 2005, the Brainerd School District's fifth grade student's math performance average scale score was 1664.
- In 2005, the State of Minnesota's fifth grade math performance average scale score was 1569.8.
- Over the last five years, our fifth grade student's mathematical performance increased from 22% of our students receiving a Level V to 60% of our students receiving a Level V. This is a 38% increase for students who are performing at an advanced academic level.

2. **Using Assessment Results:** Riverside Elementary School uses assessment data to understand and improve student and school performance. Riverside School used the data from MCA and NWEA assessments to drive instruction and improve student learning. The assessment data also provides feedback on curriculum and instruction in the Minnesota standards-based system. In addition, it is used as a communication tool with parents. The data is analyzed each year to help identify areas of concern in teaching and learning. The educational staff uses this feedback to modify instruction in the large group setting, as well as providing information for individualized learning and small groups to improve weaker strands. NWEA test data shows exactly where individual children need improvement. The data is also used to direct individual instruction. Teachers at each grade level identify areas of the curriculum that need additional educational materials and work together to find the appropriate resources. Teaching strategies are also discussed and shared,

Test data is used to identify students who are a minimum of one grade level behind for inclusion in the after school CARE program which focuses on academic needs. This program has been very successful with a wide range of students.

Test results are shared with parents to inform them of their child's progress toward achieving Minnesota graduation standards. The data helps parents see where they can work with the school to provide the best opportunity for their child's academic growth. This produces a partnership with home and school. It is also documentation for parents to see how their children are progressing toward their goals, meeting their goals, and that high standards are being taught.

3. **Communicating Assessment Results:** Riverside Elementary School communicates student performance, including assessment data, to parents, students and the community.

Communication to our community is paramount if we are to build an understanding of why we are assessing students to the degree we are. With the MCA tests, we mail results to each student's home.



With the results, we include a description of each category so parents understand what each score means. Our district includes the results of this assessment in its quarterly mailer, as well as the results printed in the local and statewide newspapers. The final way this information is shared is through the Minnesota Report Card system. This information is mailed to every taxpayer in our district with information on taxes collected for our district, data on our teachers, a breakdown of how well our school did on the MCA's, and also information on what programs/opportunities our students have, or don't have, at our building.

At Brainerd schools, we offer many other assessments. All students entering our first grade classrooms are given an Observation Survey. This is a one-on-one assessment in the fall before school starts to find a student's reading level. Upon completion, we meet with parents and share the results of this data in a conference setting.

NWEA is another assessment that we give every student, twice a year (fall and spring) from grades two through four. This assesses the areas of Math, Reading, and Language Arts. Upon completion, we conference with parents (during fall conferences) so they understand the data before them.

Finally, we allow meeting time with parents to review and/or question any results on any of the assessments mentioned above. We also share data results at our Parent-Teacher-Student Association meetings.

**4. Sharing Assessment Results:** Riverside Elementary School has shared and will continue to share its successes with other schools.

Riverside is fortunate to have the District's elementary math coordinator on our staff. This individual orders and supplied every elementary teacher with all of their math materials. She also has offered summer classes for all elementary staff. In addition, we have a trained teacher who offers training to all District staff in the area of how to use data to drive instruction. She provides information as to how to use to improve student achievement in the areas of reading, math and language. Many of our staff members are also involved with curriculum development and alignment with state standards. Several of our teachers have hosted workshops at the state level in order to share the implementation of best practices and quality teaching for all schools.

The principal at Riverside Elementary School is an adjunct professor at a local University. She provides classes at the graduate and undergraduate level. Her specialized areas are in the field of Special Education and full inclusion in the regular classroom. In addition, she has spent the last five years attending classes and workshops on Brain Based Instruction. Her goal is to reach all staff members with the dissemination of the latest research in the area of how to create an environment where all students can learn!

Brainerd School District is also a center for learning for two universities (Bemidji State and Southwest Minnesota State). These two universities place their students into practicum and student teaching experiences in order that they learn the craft of how to reach all students. These college students are the future of education and it has provided all of our staff with an excellent opportunity to share what we know as well as listening and learning from these bright students.

## **PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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All of the eight elementary schools in the Brainerd School District follow a unified curriculum that is based upon the High Academic Standards for the State of Minnesota. Our curriculum is under constant revision in order to maintain the highest standards and expectations for our students. Curriculum teams

and grade level teachers meet on a regular basis to analyze and update curriculum maps in all the core areas. On-going staff development programs support curriculum implementation.

**Reading/Language Arts:** The goal of our Reading/Language Arts program is to differentiate instruction to meet the individualized needs of readers at varied levels of ability. Teachers strive to teach reading at the instructional level of each student. As part of a Comprehensive School Reform grant, the Brainerd Schools are working towards adoption of the Literacy Collaborative Framework (see Part V, section 2s). The grade K-2 framework includes a strong phonemic awareness and phonics component word study, guided reading, shared reading, independent reading, interactive writing, and independent writing. Our grades 3-5 curriculum includes the Harcourt Collection integrated basal series. The program includes guided reading, shared reading, literature circles, grammar, and writing. On-going staff development is critical to the success of our reading/language arts program.

**Math:** The Brainerd District uses the Everyday Math Program K-5, which spirals to give multiple exposures to all the mathematical strands represented in our state's high standards. Teachers use multiple strategies and manipulatives to assist students in attaining a deeper understanding of key mathematical concepts. Math strands include: number sense, computation, and operations; patterns, functions and algebra; chance and data; geometry, and measurement. Large and small group differentiated instruction is an integral part of reaching all learners.

**Science:** Our district is currently in the curriculum review cycle for science. The State of Minnesota has recently adopted new science standards so they serve as the basis for our curriculum re-alignment. State testing in science begins in 2008. We are looking at the current research and following recommendations of the TIMMS study to drive our curriculum adoption and staff development program. Curriculum materials will be a combination of our current basal series and inquiry-based, hands-on FOSS materials.

**Social Studies:** We are currently re-aligning some of the grade level materials and adding more geography to better align with the Minnesota Academic Standards for social studies. K-5 units of study include: the family, neighborhoods, community, US and world geography, US history, and a strong map skills program. Current events and citizenship are also taught through "Time for Kids," Quest, and the Responsive Classroom models.

**Health/Physical Education:** The Healthy program has been reviewed and aligned by elementary teachers across the district to insure alignment with our state standards. The focus is for students to be physically healthy (ranging from understanding body systems to nutritional expectations) and emotionally healthy (character education for oneself and community). The Physical education curriculum is aligned with state and national standards and is offered to all students on a daily basis. It stresses the importance of personal wellness, physical fitness, and being involved in life-long activities.

**Art/Music:** The elementary music and arts programs are based on state and national standards. Music units of study include: singing, performing (instrumental), improvising, composing, reading, and evaluating music. Visual arts curriculum includes multiple mediums focusing on the principles of art and the elements of design. Classroom teachers under the direction of an arts specialist teach Art. Both programs emphasize historical and cultural perspectives. Riverside students enjoy learning about music in many different ways. Classroom general music is offered by a certified music educator in kindergarten through grade five. Three class sessions lasting 25 minutes each are scheduled per week per class. A comprehensive music curriculum, which is aligned with the National Standards for Arts Education, includes singing accuracy, playing classroom instruments including rhythm instruments and keyboards, reading and writing music, improvising and composing music, listening and evaluating music, experiences with world music and moving to music. Riverside Elementary also hosts Magic Voices, a fourth and fifth grade choir made up of 60 – 75% of the schools fourth and fifth grade students. Encouraging students to gain performing experience is a high priority at Riverside. Every student performs on stage in a winter concert each year. In addition, the fourth and fifth grade choir performs a spring concert each year. Music studies are highly supported at Riverside by administration and staff. The importance of music and its function in brain learning is recognized and utilized by Riverside staff to the great advantage of its

students.

2a. **Reading:** The following is Riverside Elementary School's reading curriculum, including a description of why we chose this particular approach to reading.

Our district has identified reading/language arts as the top priority in curriculum and instruction. Brainerd supports a unified curriculum across all eight elementary buildings. District grade level and curriculum teams monitor and adjust the curriculum as needed, based on current data and best practice research. Riverside has adopted the Literacy Collaborative framework for language arts instruction in grades K-2. Students spend a minimum of three hours a day in literacy blocks that include reader's workshop, writers' workshop, and word study. To differentiate instruction, teachers meet with children in small-guided reading groups daily. Interactive read-aloud, shared reading and independent reading support developing reading strategies at the student's instructional level. Teachers use on-going assessment tools, such as observation surveys and running records to drive their instruction. Hundreds of leveled books are available to teachers and students. A strong phonemic awareness and phonics program is an integral instructional component. Students spend a large block of time in both interactive and independent writing as well. The Harcourt Brace Collections basal program provides the framework for our intermediate reading curriculum. On-going assessments, including frequent IRI's, help teachers support readers at their instructional reading level. Guided reading, shared reading, literature circles, read alouds, and independent reading make up the reading block. In addition to a strong grammar program, Six Traits writing is the core of our writing curriculum. Students gain practice writing in the following genres, as specified by our state standards: narrative, descriptive, clarification, and problem solution. On-going staff development is critical to the success of this program. In addition to regularly scheduled grade level meetings, teachers participate in book study groups and learning communities. Our district's Comprehensive School Reform project sponsors a weeklong literacy institute during the summer. Last year the focus was guided reading and this year the focus will be writing.

3. **Math:** Another of Riverside Elementary School's curriculum discussions is centered on math. Specifically, we would like to focus on how math and its essential skills are necessary for a student's development, as well how it related as to our school's mission statement. It is the mission of Riverside Elementary School to provide and promote a safe and positive environment where acceptance, diversity, cooperation, and high expectations are supported by students, parents, and teachers. Our curriculum must be research-based, encourage life-long learning in students, and provide opportunities for parents to be active in their children's learning.

Our Every Day Math curriculum promotes a safe and positive environment for learning while encouraging high expectations. Children work cooperatively to share ideas, strategies, and algorithms. Students discover that there can be more than one way to solve a problem and that more than one answer can be acceptable. Students are continually encouraged to share strategies with one another, and mutual respect develops from this sharing.

Parents are an integral part of this curriculum. "Home Links" are papers that are sent home. These promote follow-up, provide for both remediation and enrichment, and also provide a means of involving parents or guardians in their children's mathematics education. In addition, "Explorations" lessons are done within the classroom. Parents lead small groups of children in activities that provide cooperative learning as well as giving each child the opportunity to work with manipulative. Math games are also sent home with children. Parents play these games with their children and find them enjoyable ways to practice certain number skills. These games generate excitement, determination, independence, and challenge for the children. Game rules can also be changed to fit the player's needs for fairness, harmony, equality, and difficulty. All of these activities provide many opportunities for parents to be active in their children's learning.

Our math curriculum also relates math skills to every day life. One lesson allows children to spend fake money in an office shops. Another lesson has children spend money in a vending machine and figure out how much change they will receive. These are only two examples of many that provide children with

experiences that relate to their every day life.

The Every Day math curriculum is entwined with our mission statement. Each child learns at his/her level. Expectations from students, parents, and teachers are high, achievable, and understood. Our students can reach their potential in academic achievement through this curriculum.

4. **Instructional Methods:** Riverside Elementary School uses different instructional methods to improve student learning.

We believe that early intervention is the key to building academic success. Prior to first grade, all of our students are tested to determine those that need additional helping reading. We offer a Reading Recovery program where one student will work daily with a one-to-one (student to teacher) ratio for a 30-minute time period. Riverside School is also in the process of implementing the Literacy Collaborative program with extensive teacher training. Our goal through this is to have all children working in a literacy based environment, at appropriate reading levels, and challenging all children at their individual levels. In addition to this, we offer Direct Reading Instruction and small-guided reading and literature groups. Students are encouraged to discuss and use critical thinking skills in the smaller group settings.

Everyday Math and Investigations programs help to instill critical thinking as well as working together cooperatively. Students are encouraged to explain how they arrived at their answers during problem solving and use hands-on games/activities to make the learning enjoyable and practical.

Grade levels have set up homework rooms where children may go after lunch to get additional help in any subject area or to get caught up due to absences. This helps reduce gaps in learning when students are gone from school and provides review for those who have difficulty understanding the lessons. There are also CARE groups for students that are struggling academically and socially. CARE programs are offered after school and are offered to any interested students in grades K-5.

We have specialists in art, physical education, media, and music who work with all students. This gives the children a chance to learn in diverse environments, while working on their physical skills, as well as experiencing the art programs offered by our district.

Finally, many of our teachers have implemented practices of the Responsive Classroom. This was implemented because students who feel accepted within their classrooms will learn better.

5. **Professional Development:** Riverside Elementary School's professional development program has a major impact on improving student achievement.

Professional Development is the cornerstone of all Brainerd School's curriculum. Without well-trained educators, the curriculum is meaningless. Our professional development begins the moment a teacher is hired in the district. We have a Beginning Teacher Support System where beginning teachers participate in a formal mentorship program, Pathwise™ assessment, beginning teacher seminars, and cohort/support groups. As evidence of professional growth, each beginning teacher produces two major projects, and individualized Professional Development Plan, and a Professional Portfolio.

Next, all Brainerd teachers have two types of in-District staff development. The first is district-wide grade level meetings. These are meetings held three times per year for every grade level to meet strictly as a grade level. This gives teachers the opportunity to focus on specific curricular areas, instructional methods, or similar grade level challenges with a peer group that truly understands the challenges at that grade. The other type of staff development is a "floating in-service" day. This is an eight-hour time period that an educator has the chance to attend various courses provided by the district during the summer months. The courses range from any curricular area in today's schools, current trends or best practice methods, or content specific ideas to make them a better educator. This method of staff development allows teachers the flexibility to take classes on their schedule, as well as over the summer so they can be in the classroom during the school year.

Finally, with the adoption of the Literacy Collaborative model in grades K-2, teachers each month meet and review best practice methods in this literacy based model. Under the direction of a literacy

coach, teachers review and discuss current research and student work to hone their skills, and learn together as a team what their students need in the area of reading and writing.

## PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 3 Test: MCA

**\*\* Riverside School is the District Site for students who are Moderate to Severely Disabled. \*\***

### Riverside Achievement Results – Data Display Table for Grade 3 READING MCA

Testing Month	2005 April	2004 March	2003 April	2002 March	2001 March
Average Scale Score	1734	1665	1617	1566	1564
% At or Above Meets State Standards	99 %	89 %	88 %	82 %	79 %
% At Exceeds State Standards	98 %	84 %	83 %	61 %	68 %
Number of Students Tested	97	87	94	96	93
Percent of Students Tested	100 %	100 %	99 %	100 %	100 %
Number of Students Alternatively Assessed	5	6	4	4	4
Percent of Students Alternatively Assessed	5 %	6 %	4 %	4 %	4 %
<i>SUBGROUP SCORE</i>					
1. Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch					
Average Scale Score	1746.1	1603.1	1571.4	1508.4	1466.7
% At or Above Meets State Standards	100 %	84 %	80 %	76 %	62 %
% At Exceeds State Standards	100 %	81 %	79 %	52 %	48 %
Number or Students Tested	23	32	29	25	21

### Riverside Achievement Results – Data Display Table for Grade 3 MATH MCA

Testing Month	2005 April	2004 March	2003 April	2002 March	2001 March
Average Scale Score	1819	1686	1611	1603	1678
% At or Above Meets State Standards	96 %	86 %	89 %	80 %	92 %
% At Exceeds State Standards	93 %	76 %	70 %	64 %	87 %
Number of Students Tested	98	87	95	95	91
Percent of Students Tested	100 %	100 %	99 %	100 %	100 %
Number of Students Alternatively Assessed	5	6	4	4	4
Percent of Students Alternatively Assessed	5 %	6 %	4 %	4 %	4 %
<i>Subgroup Score</i>					
1. Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch					
Average Scale Score	1773.3	1589.1	1569.3	1539.2	1651.0
% At or Above Meets State Standards	96 %	82 %	78 %	76 %	90 %
% At Exceeds State Standards	92 %	66 %	68 %	56 %	85 %
Number of Students Tested	24	32	28	25	21

### Riverside Achievement Result – Data Display Table for Grade 5 READING MCA

Testing Month	2005 April	2004 March	2003 April	2002 March	2001 March
Average Scale Score	1741	1733	1705	1690	1661
% At or Above Meets State Standards	99 %	93 %	91 %	94 %	97 %
% At Exceeds State Standards	93 %	87 %	84 %	89 %	85 %

Number of Students Tested	97	101	102	107	89
Percent of Students Tested	100	100	99	100	100
Number of Students Alternatively Assessed	4	7	4	4	4
Percent of Students Alternatively Assessed	4 %	6%	3 %	3 %	4 %
<i>Subgroup Score</i>					
1. Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch					
Average Scale Score	1705.0	1673.5	1644.0	1669.3	1607.6
% At or Above Meets State Standards	100 %	94 %	85 %	99 %	86 %
% At Exceeds State Standards	88 %	79 %	80 %	89 %	76 %
Number of Students Tested	26	26	20	27	21

**Riverside Achievement Result – Data Display Table for Grade 5 MATH MCA**

Testing Month	2005 April	2004 March	2003 April	2002 March	2001 March
Average Scale Score	1766	1671	1685	1642	1603
% At or Above Meets State Standards	99 %	96 %	89 %	93 %	87 %
% At Exceeds State Standards	92 %	89 %	85 %	80 %	\
Number of Students Tested	98	100	102	106	91
Percent of Students Tested	100 %	100 %	99 %	100 %	100 %
Number of Students Alternatively Assessed	4	7	4	4	4
Percent of Students Alternatively Assessed	4 %	7 %	3 %	3 %	3 %
<i>SUBGROUP SCORE</i>					
1. Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch					
Average Scale Score	1713.1	1625.2	1610.0	1601.9	1520.9
% At or Above Meets State Standards	99 %	94 %	90 %	93 %	74 %
% At Exceeds State Standards	92 %	88 %	70 %	78 %	61 %
Number of Students Tested	26	25	20	27	23

